Frequently Asked Questions Regarding EPA's Proposed New Asbestos Rule

Will EPA's new regulation allow EPA to restrict new uses?

Yes.

EPA's new significant new use rule (SNUR) proposed on June 1, 2018 broadens EPA's restrictions on asbestos products. EPA is proposing to ensure that manufacture, import, or processing for the currently unregulated new uses identified in the SNUR are prohibited unless reviewed by EPA. EPA's proposed new review process empowers EPA to take action, including prohibiting or limiting its intended use.

Did the Obama Administration have the opportunity to propose to restrict new uses of asbestos and did they propose any action?

Yes, they had the opportunity to propose restrictions on new uses.

No, they did not propose any action.

Is asbestos banned today?

No. Currently, asbestos is used for a handful of uses including water purification. The uses are identified in EPA's problem formulation for asbestos (found here).

Does EPA allow the import of asbestos from Russia?

EPA cannot simply ban imports, regardless of their source, for current uses unless its ongoing evaluation under the Toxic Substances Control Act identifies unreasonable risk associated with such importation. The SNUR, when final, would prevent import, including from Russia and anywhere else, for the uses in the rule.

Asbestos Uses That Are Outright Banned

- Corrugated paper
- Rollboard
- Commercial paper
- Specialty paper
- Flooring felt
- New commercial uses that begin after August 25, 1989

Potential Market Uses Prevented by the SNUR[1]

- Asbestos arc chutes
- Asbestos pipeline wrap
- Asbestos separators in fuel cells and batteries
- Asbestos-reinforced plastics
- Beater-add gaskets
- Extruded sealant tape
- Filler for acetylene cylinders
- High-grade electrical paper
- Millboard
- Missile liner
- Roofing felt
- Vinyl-asbestos floor tile
- Adhesives and Sealants
- Roof and Non-Roof Coatings
- Other Building Products (other than cement products)

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[1] These uses existed in 1989 and were not banned. The SNUR prevents market re-entry.